

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 2853

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1(DECONTROL 1995)

TAGS: PFOR PINT LE IR

SUBJ: IRANIAN ASSISTANCE FOR LEBANON AND RELATED

QUESTIONS

REF: STATE 070467, 76 TEHRAN 12693(NOTAL)

1. CHARGE AND ADCM HAD A LONG DISCUSSION WITH LEBANESE AMB
KHALIK AL-KHALIL SHORTLY BEFORE RECEIPT OF STATE REFTEL.
THE MAIN PURPOSE OF KHALIL'S INITIATIVE IN ARRANGING THIS
DISCUSSION WAS TO PRESS HIS THESIS THAT THE SYRAINS ARE
INSTALLING THEMSELVES IN A MORE PERMANENT FASHION IN LEBANON.
HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE ACTIVITY OF SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE,
OF SYRIAN INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS THE "PALESTINIAN" SAIGA IN
ATTEMPTING TO SUPPLANT ARAFAT, AND OF EFFORTS TO INSTALL A
BA'ATHIST PARTY APPARATUS IN LEBANON. KHALIL MADE NO EFFORT
TO HID THE FACT THAT HIS SYMPATHIES LIE WITH THE VIEWS
OF RIGHT WING CHRISTIANS (HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED HIS
CLOSE CONTACTS WITH FORMER PRES FRANGIE), AND INDEED
WE HAVE SEEN ARGUMENTS IDENTICAL TO THOSE HE PUT FORTH
ATTRIBUTED TO RIGHT WING SPOKESMEN SUCH AS BECHIR GEMAYEL

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IN OTHER CHANNELS.

2. KHALIL MADE ABSOLUTELY NO REFERNNECE TO IRANIAN
ASSISTANCE FOR LEBANESE SHITES, EVEN THOUGH HE IS ONE
HIMSELF, AND MUC OF THE DISCUSSION RANGED OVER CURRENT
SHI'ITE DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE SYRIAN-BACKED GOL AND
SYRIAN INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS (ACCORDING TO KHALIL) IMAN

MUSA SADR. WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING FORM ANY OTHER SOURCE ABOUT IRANIAN PLANS TO ASSIST THE SHITES.

3. DEPT WILL RECALL FROM TEHRAN REFTEL THAT KHALIL APPROACHED GOI WITH AN OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR IRANIAN ASSISTANCE TO REARM AND REHABILITATE LEBANON'S SECURITY FORCE LAST DECEMBER. HE WAS TURNED DOWN, AND CONFIDED TO CHARGE (THEN DCM) THAT HE HAD FOLLOWED THESE INSTRUCTIONS AGAINST HIS BETTER JUDGEMENT, BELIEVING IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO SEEK ONLY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM IRAN AND SATISFY LEBANON'S MILITARY NEEDS ELSEWHERE. THIS COULD SUGGEST KHALIL WOULD BE A WILLING CONVEYOR OF ANY NEW INSTRUCTIONS TO SEEK HUMANITARIAN AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR SHIITE AREAS OF LEBANON, EVEN THOUGH DANY CHAMOUN INDICATED SOME OTHER CHANNEL MAY BE USED (DEPT REFTEL).

4. WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH THE IRANIANS (OR KHALIL), BUT WOULD EXPECT FOLLOWING FACTORS TO BE AMONG THOSE WIGHED BY IRANIANS IN REACTION TO SUCH REQUESTS: (A) IRAN'S PRESENT SHORTAGE OF FUNDS FOR EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE; (B) AN IRANIAN DESIRE NOT TO TURN AWAY SHITES EMPTY-HANDED; (C) IRANIAN CONCERN LEST ASSISTANCE TO ONE SEGMENT OF LEBANON'S COMMUNITY BE VIEWED BY OTHER FRIENDLY SEGMENTS (I.E., RIGHTIST CHRISTIANS) AS MANIPULATIVE OR INTERVENTIONIST; AND (D) MANNER IN WHICH REQUEST IS PUT TO GOI, WHITH PROBABILITY USG SUPPORT FOR REQUEST WOULD HELP CONSIDERABLY.

5. WE NOTE, INCIDENTALLY, THAT KHALIL TOLD US IN
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DECEMBER HE WAS AWAITING SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS TO DIS-
CUSS SOUTHERN LEBANON WITH ISRAELI REPS IN TEHRAN (TEHRAN REFTEL). THIS SUBJECT HAS NEVER COME UP AGAIN IN OUR CONTATCT EITHER WIH KHALIL OR WITH THE UNOFFICIAL ISRAELI EMB HERE, THOUGH WE NOTE SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WOULD NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY SUCH CONTACTS MIGHT HAVE TAKEN PLACE.

6. FINALLY, IN HIS MOST RECENT MEETING WITH CHARGE, KHALIL MADE A POINT OF MENTIONING HE KNOWS VICTOR KHOURY, THE NEW COS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY, INTIMATELY. KHALIL CHARACTERIZES KHOURY AS A NICE GUY, BUT NO ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF.
MIKLOS

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